

THIS IS THE TRUTH

about the

San Diego Hearings of the Tenney Committee

For three days, from Sept. 8 to 10, inclusive, the infamous Tenney Committee of the California State Senate on Un-American Activities, held hearings in San Diego; quite fittingly, considering its service to the capitalist class, in the auditorium of the Chamber of Commerce.

Prior to the hearings, some 30 subpoenas were issued. Among those commanded to appear, were two reactionary trade union officials of the A.F.L., 30 odd persons locally prominent in the Communist Party and Independent Progressive Party, among these, five Communist recently "expelled" or "suspended" (together with two Communist Party clubs of which they were members) for having exercised their inner-Party democratic right and duty to criticize the Party leadership for Right Opportunism during the pre-convention "discussion" period.

Of these five, one was hospitalized and could not appear. The other four, William Pope, Jack Benet, George Goodrow, and his wife Virginia Goodrow, appeared, and with the others subpoenaed, including some local Communist Party officials, testified before the Tenney Committee.

About the testimony and character of these four Communist, both during and since the hearings, such mendacious falsehoods and innuendoes, have been circulated, particularly in the People's World (which will be quoted later), that it is necessary in the interest of the Communist Party itself, against which these falsehoods finally rebound for the truth about these hearings and their surrounding circumstances be as widely known as the lies which this truth exposes.

Prior to the Hearings

Before the hearings, as the newspapers began to publish the names of those subpoenaed, Bernadette Doyle, San Diego County Chairman of the Communist Party -- publicly known as such by her voluntary interviews published in the San Diego Journal -- and one of those subpoenaed, disappeared.

Indeed, the Communist Party itself disappeared; issued no statement, published no leaflets, called for no protest, and did not even venture to advise its own subpoenaed members as to their conduct before the committee. This Right Opportunist abdication of its supposed "vanguard" role, left the grotesque situation where the Independent Progressive Party (IPP) undertook the function of advising Communist Party members as to how they should behave before the Tenney Committee, when "accused" of being Communists.

Pursuant to this weird reversal of roles, on September 5, 1948, Mrs. Lynn Akerstein, County Director of the IPP, issued a memorandum to all subpoenaed IPP officials, among whom were Communist Party members, both "regular" and "expelled," stating that the purpose of the Tenney Committee was to "smear" the new Independent Progressive Party.

Now, it is self evident that the IPP could not possibly be "smeared" unless the Communist Party itself can be "smeared." For the one and only charge made by reactionaries of all stripes against the IPP, is that it is supported by the Communist Party. Tenney, indeed, falsely says that it is "a continuation" of the Communist Party.

Therefore, the four "expelled" Communists mentioned, took the view that their chief task was to defend the Communist Party, to explain its principles, its justification for existence as an independent political party of the working class, which, though itself advocating the democracy of socialism, or proletarian democracy, lends independent aid to all democratic and progressive movements, including the movement for peace and against Fascism of the IPP, in whose campaign all of them had done outstanding work.

These "expelled" Communists took the "1948 Election Platform of the Communist Party," as published in The Worker (New York) of August 15, 1948, to be Communist Party policy, and they carried it out. That platform publicly proclaimed that "In 1948 we Communists join with millions of other Americans to support the Progressive ticket to help win the peace." Hence, there was and is nothing in the support given by Communists to the IPP in San Diego, either violative of Communist Party policy, or "secret" "mysterious" or "subversive", or in any way requiring concealment or evasion either as to their being Communists, or as their being active supporters of the IPP.

Wallace "Welcomes" Communist Support

Similarly, these four "expelled" Communists read the official statement of Henry Wallace on Communist-Progressive Party relationship in the Daily Worker of August 26, 1948, which, in part, declared: "Communism and progressive capitalism differ fundamentally, although we share many social objectives. I welcome the support of those who believe in such social objectives." Also noted, was the official platform of the PP Party Philadelphia convention stating that defense of the Communist Party was a first duty of all Progressives.

These four "expelled" Communists, therefore, carrying out the publicly declared policy of both the Communist Party and the Progressive Party platforms, felt that not only was there nothing to hide—if, indeed, it could be hidden—in the relationship of the Communist Party to the IPP, but that as full and frank a declaration as might be possible to make of these policies, particularly a defense of the Communist Party, would be the best thing to deflate the red-baiting of the Tenney Committee, according to which the Communist Party itself is some sort of "criminal conspiracy" and its support to the IPP equally "secret" and "subversive".

Together with all progressive people, these four "expelled" Communists recognize the pro-Fascist nature of the Tenney Committee, its Fascistic practice in cooking up wholly imaginary "plots" to inflate "red scares" particularly before elections, and its infamous practice of blacklisting the names of anyone who is "radical" enough to take a stand even slightly to the left of chattel slavery.

But they, these four "expelled" Communists, contend as Marx did in The Communist Manifesto of 1848, that the best answer to these "nursery tales" of the "specter of Communism," is a public avowal of "the views and aims" of the Communist Party, as something of which to be proud, but never ashamed.

They are in complete disagreement with that violation of Communist Party official policy which, in practice amounts to self-red-baiting, whereby the prevailing custom has been for Communists to quibble, evade and even to deny being Communists in such manner as to convince everyone—even themselves, apparently—that being a Communist is something shameful. Never in the history of the world Communist movement—until the present CPUSA leadership polluted the Party with such unofficial bourgeois concepts—has there been such an attitude adopted by Communists of any country.

It has ever been that the exploiting capitalist class considers that everything antagonist to its power and profits, particularly trade unionism and Communism, is fundamentally criminal. Every propagandist for the capitalist class either subtly or openly strives to convince public opinion of that concept. It is the concept of Tenney who, in the San Diego Journal of Sept. 3, tried to put over this concept when, in speaking about Communist who might appear before his committee, said: "If they admit being Communist, their influence among non-Communist is gone. If they deny it, they face perjury charges. There is no alternative but to hide behind camouflage on the ground that replying to such a question is a violation of their civil rights."

The four "expelled" Communist refused to adopt the concept of Tenney, or to resort to his favorite "alternative", which is so helpful to his fascistic red-baiting. True, they considered the possibility of taking the course taken some months ago by Vern Smith (also "expelled" unjustly from the Communist Party), when he refused to be sworn or to testify before the Tenney Committee. That, if anything, was the ultimate in defiance and "contempt" of such a committee.

But two factors decided these four "expelled" Communist against such a course. The first, is the duty of all Communist, when forced to speak before capitalist inquisitors, to defend -- nay, to advocate -- the principles of the Communist Party. The second, was the utterly shameful and anti-Communist treatment the Communist Party gave Vern Smith when he was prosecuted and convicted of "contempt" of the Tenney Committee.

Not only was Vern Smith slandered and ridiculed in the People's World for his defiance of the Tenney Committee; not only did the Communist Party refuse even the slightest assistance in his legal defense (in violation of every principle of unity against reaction by Communist Parties the world over), but Party members were forbidden even to discuss aiding his defense.

More, and beyond all limit of ordinary decency, the Communist Party placed a boycott against the Chairman of the Vern Smith Defense Committee, Warren K. Billings, who, with Tom Mooney, gave twenty-six years of his life to the working class behind the prison bars of Folsom Penitentiary.

This boycott, imposed by self-styled "Communist leaders," bars this world-renowned labor martyr -- who himself is not a Communist -- and still is subject to re-imprisonment, from making a living as a self-employed watch-maker in his declining years -- merely because he felt it his duty to defend a victim of the Tenney Committee against a jail sentence. By this, let it be known who aids the Tenney Committee, the "expelled" Communist or the Communist Party mis-leadership!

Thus, these four "expelled" Communist, appeared with others (with the exception of the disappearing Bernadette Doyle) before the committee, to utilize whatever opportunity might be offered -- which is not much at the best -- and as best they could as workers, to defend the principles of Communism, the Communist Party and their right to be Communist. Not, of course, with any idea of changing the fascist minds of the committee, but of reaching with a Communist message whatever workers might hear or read what they had to say. Incidentally the audience consisted of over 300 people.

A Different and Anti-Communist Idea

However, as IPP members, they were summoned by IPP County Director, Lynn Akerstein, to "suggested plans of action" in the memorandum mentioned of Sept. 5. Among the "general pointers" which this memo gave, were the statements that -- "Individuals should themselves

decide how to answer the committee's questions after consultation with counsel," and the further disclaimer (worth remembering in view of what happened later) that -- "The IPP State and County Offices are not trying to dictate what any person who is subpoenaed shall say or do."

Nevertheless, some rather pointed suggestions were made that, if asked: "Are you now or have you ever been a member of the Communist Party?" -- the answer should be: "Its none of your business." This, the Akerstein memorandum made clear, was because "Its clear that the current Tenney hearings are for smear purposes only."

And, in line with this, the memorandum advised that "No person who is subpoenaed should appear before the Committee without prior legal consultation," and announced that Attorney John McTernan of Los Angeles would be available for "individual" consultation. Therefore, the four "expelled" Communist went "individually" to consult with McTernan, the IPP attorney.

The result, unhappily, only confirmed Lenin's advice to Bolsheviks who appear in court: Firstly, to "hire only clever barristers," and, secondly, to "put barristers under martial law" to prevent them betraying fundamental principles of working class revolutionaries by shyster legalisms.

It is entirely apropos to this situation, that Lenin's letter to Stasova awaiting trial in Moscow prison in 1905, as given on page 129 of "Lenin, a Biography," by Ralph Fox (a British Communist killed in Spain fighting Franco), on how to instruct a lawyer, rather than how to be instructed by a lawyer, be here given, as follows:

"Confine yourself to the law," Lenin told Stasova to tell her lawyer.

"Bring the witnesses and prosecution into contempt, but don't touch on the convictions of the accused, don't dare to hint even about your opinion of his conviction and actions. For you, my little Liberal, are so incapable of understanding these convictions, that even when you praise them you can't do it without some kind of idiocy." Of course, explain all this to the barrister not churlishly, but gently, concedingly, subtly and carefully."

The four "expelled" Communist found, however, that no matter how gently they explained to Attorney McTernan that they were not ashamed of being Communist, and were -- moreover -- sick and tired of seeing other Communist behave as if they were ashamed of being called Communist, still Attorney McTernan was either unresponsive or not such a "clever barrister" as Lenin recommended. He snarled at the implication that truck-drivers and building trades workers should attempt to decide how their political convictions should be defended. And he demanded, virtually, that they "defy the committee" or be cast into the outer darkness of his superior displeasure.

Recollection of what Vern Smith's real defiance of the Tenney Committee had earned for him, begot only a feeling that, whether they defied the committee, or whether they followed Lenin's advice to "use the court for agitation" as best they could, the result would be the same, so far as receiving only slander from the Communist Party misleadership -- was concerned.

The Hearings Open

It is impossible to give here the complete testimony of all witnesses. Nor is it necessary. As examples, we give the full testimony of David Buchanan and of William Pope. As an example of those who followed McTernan's advice, we give the testimony of Buchanan, member of the County Board of the Communist Party, whose Communist membership was announced by himself in the Central Labor Council in 1947, and is, hence, no secret. All testimony here given, is substantially accurate,

though no claim is made that it follows precisely every word and comma of the court record. It is certainly more accurate and far more complete than any version yet published. It was taken down as heard by an observer in the audience.

On the morning of Sept. 8, 1948, David Buchanan was called as the first witness, and questioned by Richard E. Combs, Tenney Committee counsel, as follows:

Buchanan's Testimony

Q—My record shows you were born in Argentina. Is this correct?

A—That is a matter of record. It is correct.

Q—Were you living in San Diego in 1942?

A—Yes

Q—What was your address at that time?

A—I can't give it. I don't remember.

Q—Did you subscribe to the People's World in June of 1942?

A—I'm not sure whether I did or not. But I should have and if I didn't it was because I didn't have the money.

Q—You have been active in fund drives for the People's World, haven't you?

A—Yes.

Q—Did you know Morgan Hull?

A—You have no right to ask me such a question.

Q—You were acquainted with him, weren't you?

A—You heard my answer.

Q—He is deceased, is he not?

A—Yes, he is, and he is one of the finest persons I ever knew.

Q—How do you know?

A—I've read it.

Q—Did you ever hear of the American Youth for Democracy?

A—What kind of a question is that?

Q—Have you ever heard of it?

A—Yes

Q—Were you a sponsor of it?

A—I think so.

Q—It is a matter of record that you were a local and state sponsor.

A—I hope so.

Q—You attended the convention of the AYD in 1944, did you not?

A—Your records are better than my memory.

Q—Did you, or did you not?

A—I can't remember.

Q—It is a matter of record that you did.

A—Then I must have been there.

Q—Were you a sponsor of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee?

A—I don't remember. I have helped many organizations.

Combs—(Showing exhibit) Look at this letterhead with list of sponsors. Maybe this will help refresh your memory. (Buchanan reads letter)

Combs then reads off list of sponsors stating upon conclusion that:

"Leading citizens often join Communist-front organizations innocently".

Buchanan—You are just smearing these public-minded people. That is what your committee is set up for — to smear reputable people! Just trying to smear these people by linking their names with mine, since I am a known Communist! It's smear, smear, smear!

Q—You don't excite us, Mr. Buchanan. You stated that you were a known Communist. When did you affiliate with the Communist Party?

A—Did I? Did I make that statement? — that I am a known Communist? Did I say that?

Combs—Yes. The court reporter will read it to you from his record. (The court reporter reads Buchanan's previous statement)

Buchanan—That was a slip. I didn't mean to say that. I get excited when I see Fascist committees like this...

Combs—Don't get excited Mr. Buchanan.

Buchanan—Sure, I'm excited. Fascist committees like this excite me.

Combs—Let's keep our tempers. If you refuse to answer, just say so. You did state that you were a known Communist.

Buchanan—I did not answer such a question. You have no right to ask it under the Constitution.

Combs—But you volunteered the information.

Buchanan—I volunteered, and, boy am I proud of it! But I can't tell you the exact date.

Q—The question is, when did you affiliate? You can certainly tell us approximately how long ago. You may refuse to answer if you like.

A—I won't answer. I mean you have no right to ask me that. I don't remember when. Let me tell you a story...

Q—We don't want a story. Answer the question.

A—My folks were missionaries, and I was born in Argentina. They taught me that people should live as brothers.

Q—Your giving me reasons. When did you join the party?

A—I can't remember the date.

Q—Were you a member of the County Committee of the Communist Party in 1945?

A—I can't remember. But if your records show it, I must have been.

Q—The records show you were a member of the Communist Executive Committee of San Diego County in 1945. Did you go to the state school?

A—Yeah, and boy, it was really swell. They taught me a lot about Committees like this.

Q—When did the Communist Party become the Communist Political Association?

A—You have no right to ask me that.

Q—Why don't you refuse to answer then?

A—I'm not refusing to answer.

Q—Then answer the question.

A—I don't know.

Q—You must know.

A—What has that to do with your committee?

Q—Answer the question.

A—I don't know.

Q—My records show you attended the Communist Political Association Convention in July 1945.

A—You have no right to ask that question.

Q—Answer the question.

A—It's a matter of record that I did. You have no right to ask. I was there.

Q—Is it true that you were elected as a special delegate to the National Convention in New York of the same year?

A—What right have you to ask me this?

Combs—We have the right. The committee determines the pertinency of the questions.

Buchanan—I would'n't refuse to answer for myself, but I am thinking of other people. You are just smearing people. I won't conspire with any of you guys to smear the people fighting against Fascist committees such as this.

Q—Answer the question.

A—I can't remember.

Q—Did you attend the 1945 August State Communist Party Convention in 1945?

A—I can't remember dates.

Q—Do you deny it?

A—No.

Q—Did you attend any convention in 1945?

A—I don't remember.

Q—Once more Mr. Buchanan, answer the question.

A—Yes, I did.

Q—Did you attend the state Communist Party Convention in Los Angeles?

A—If it is a matter of record, of course, I was there.

Q—Did you ever hear of an activity of the Communist Party known as new members classes?

A—Most organizations try to educate their members.

Q—What was taught?

A—What difference does that make?

Q—We're investigating Communism. Do they teach Marxist theory?

A—I attended some and they were damned good.

Q—What was taught at these classes?

A—That there was a different system of living than the one we're living under, that we should live as brothers, to cooperate in making a better world.

Q—Is that Marxism?

A—Yes, of course, undoubtedly.

Q—On a national or international scale?

A—I live in San Diego. That's what I'm talking about.

Q—You mean on a local basis?

A—Yes.

Q—Are they taught the class struggle?

A—They are told why pork chops are so high. And about how negroes are persecuted. They know there is a better way of life.

Q—Does the Communist Party use as a textbook the "History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union?"

A—I don't know.

Q—Have you read it?

A—I've read lots of books.

Q—Have you read that book?

A—Which book?

Q—The official History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union?

A—I imagine.

Q—Did you?

A—Yes, I read it.

Q—Is it being used as a textbook by the Communist Party?

A—I imagine. This is a Fascist committee. You have no right to ask me these questions.

Combs—Then refuse to answer the question.

Buchanan—Just why do you want me to refuse?

Combs—Because then you would find out if we had the right. If you refuse to answer a pertinent question, we will cite you for contempt.

Tenney—Your testimony follows a Communist pattern of evading issues, a pattern used by traitors, who hide behind the shield of better housing, anti-segregation and other causes. You're not fooling anybody.

Buchanan—Your record stinks and you know it.

Burns—Mr. Buchanan, you are an open Communist. Why don't you want to tell us about your party? (No reply)

Combs—You were chairman of the Communist Political Association Convention in Los Angeles July 15th to 19th — 1945 were you not?

A—What has that got to do with this committee?

Q—Then refuse to answer the question.

A—I'm scared of you guys. You guys are Fascist. I'm scared of you and all these cops around here. If I've done anything illegal, my record is as good as any of yours. You're making this an inquisition.

Q—This is my final question, Mr. Buchanan, In June 1948, you attended the San Diego County Convention of the Communist Party. Is this true?

A—You have no right to ask this question.

Q—Were you elected to the state convention at this convention?

A—I was but you have no right to ask me that.

Combs—That is all.

Pope's Testimony

Having read the foregoing testimony of David Buchanan, who finished by admitting that he attended the San Diego County Convention of the Communist Party which approved the prior expulsion of William J. Pope, but which did not give him the opportunity to state his case on appeal.

Buchanan, a member of the Building Trades Club, who attended prior to the county convention 2 club meetings in 3 months and who actively participated in the suspension of the elected delegates, attended the convention as an illegal delegate and recommended the expulsion of those comrades who had been legally elected in accordance with the C.P.

Let us see what the testimony of Pope was like.-- Again, the questioner is Richard E. Combs, committee counsel:

Combs: Have you ever been a member of the Communist Party?

Pope: Yes, I have.

Q-- When did you first join the Communist Party?

A-- 1937

Q-- Where?

A-- Los Angeles.

Q-- Did you continue your membership when you came to San Diego?

A-- I waited some time until my transfer came through.

Q-- Was the transfer effected in 1947?

A-- I don't remember the exact date. I believe the early part of 1948.

Q-- At the time you transferred was Bernadette Doyle the organizer?

A-- No.

(At this point, Combs produced two documents. No. 1 a photostatic copy of a statement by the Frontier Club--"expelled". No. 2 a photostatic copy of an article entitled "The Party" by Harrison George.)

Q-- Do you have any knowledge concerning these documents?

A-- Yes

Q-- What was the origin of Document No. 1.

A-- The California State Senate Resolution No. 75, under the section entitled "Purpose", reads that this committee was created for the purpose of "investigating persons or groups known or suspected of being controlled or dominated by a foreign government, and to recommend legislation." I don't see where any differences arising within the Communist Party could be the subject for any legislation by this Committee.

Q-- Do you refuse to answer?

A-- No. I know the origin of it, but this committee is going beyond its jurisdiction in this matter, since the internal differences that occasionally arise in the Party can only be corrected by Party members themselves. Does this committee contemplate recommending legislation to control and regulate the internal problems of the Communist Party? I know you would like to, but I'm certain that this is a matter beyond the scope of this committee's jurisdiction.

Combs: We have to know how the Communist Party functions.

Pope: Nevertheless, I don't feel that the internal affairs of the Communist Party are the business of this committee.

Q-- Who wrote it?

A-- It was the collective work of the club members.

Q-- Does it represent anyone other than the Frontier Club?

A-- No. it pertains solely to the members of that Club.

Q-- Could you explain what led to your expulsion?

A-- Mr. Combs, I want you and this committee to know that I was never raised to be a stool-pigeon, and that despite my expulsion, I still regard myself as a Communist. I believe in the principles of the Communist Party and though I had differences with the manner in which those principles were being applied, I am still for the Communist Party. The Communist Party has an honorable and admirable record and can always be identified as one of the best allies of all organizations that fight for progressive causes. The Communist Party has fought the reactionary advance of Fascism the world over. Many American Communist as well as Communist all over the world volunteered and gave their lives in an attempt to prevent the rise of Fascism in Spain. Communist have a real record to their credit in building, unifying and strengthening the organizations of the working class in this country--particularly the trade unions. One of the largest and most powerful trade unions in this country to-day, the United Auto Workers, was energetically and actively assisted from its earliest beginnings by members of the Communist Party.

Combs: (Who had been trying to interrupt constantly) Now, Mr. Pope, let's not get so emotional about all this... Mr. Pope, did you ever live in Escondido?

A-- No, I live in Poway.

Q— Do you know anything about this article? (Exhibiting Document No. 2)

A— Yes. It was written by Harrison George, a man with a 40-year record with the Socialist and Communist movement in this country. A charter member of the Communist Party, and for eight years editor of the People's World, a man whose son was caught doing underground work and tortured to death by the fascist Vargas dictatorship in Brazil.

Q— How did you know his son was murdered?

A— I am personally acquainted with Mr. George.

Q— When did you last meet Mr. George?

A— I can't recall the exact date. A month or so ago.

Q— Do you know Vern Smith?

A— No, not personally. I have read many of his articles when he was writing the Foreign Affairs column of the People's World.

Q— Was he expelled?

A— You should know, since he refused to testify before this committee.

Combs: Yes. And we made short work of Mr. Smith. I think it took us six minutes to dispense with Mr. Smith.

Q— Do you know of the San Francisco Committee of Correspondence?

A— I have heard of it.

Q— What does it consist of?

A— I understand that it consist of expelled members.

Q— Where did the committee get its name?

A— I don't know. I know nothing more than that such a committee does exist.

Q— Are there other units outside of California?

A— It appears that other groups do exist which have also disagreed with the mis-application of Communist Party program and tactics. These differences have cropped up at various times in the history of all Communist Parties. In Yugoslavia, for example, such differences now exist but there is no doubt in my mind that all such differences will eventually be rectified to the best interest of the Party and the working class.

Q— Did you ever hear of a New York Committee of Correspondence?

A— No.

Tenney: (interrupting) — Do you still consider yourself a Communist?

A— Yes, I do. As I stated before, I have no differences with the principles or objectives of the Communist Party. The Communist Party is a vanguard party of the working class, that sets as its goal the historic objective of leading the working class to Socialism. Socialism alone is the only system of society that can put an end to the chronic depressions and wars that are created by capitalism. Every so often, the American people are called upon to go out and fight and die in a war for Standard Oil. Socialism would abolish the economic causes for war.

Combs: Did you have a hearing?

A— I had what was termed a hearing, not a trial.

Q— Who sat in on those hearings?

A— The County Board.

Q— Did you have an opportunity for defense?

A— I presented my views.

Q— Did you consider it fair?

A— I would have considered it fair had I been granted the constitutional right of appeal. I would have accepted the decision of the convention delegates, but since I was denied this right of appeal, naturally I could not accept the decision as being fair.

Tenney: (interrupting)—Do you adhere to the Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist line of the Party?

A— I adhere to the collective, democratically arrived at decisions of the American Communist Party in respect to those policies and tactics to be pursued relative to American conditions.

Tenney: (repeats the question with emphasis on the "Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist" line of the Party.)

A— The principles of Marx, Lenin and Stalin are basic principles of Communist theory, and were developed to a large extent out of conditions in Russia. In general, these principles serve as a good theoretical guide for all Communist parties.

Tenney: As a Communist do you adhere to the Communist line as the only line to bring about the revolution?

A-- I believe in the Communist Party since it has shown to me by its deeds that it defends the immediate needs and best interest of all working people. The Communist Party works with all groups interested in more and better houses, an end to inflationary high prices, for peace, civil rights and so on. But Communists maintain that the final solution, the final salvation, can only be achieved through Socialism.

Tenney: Did you ever disagree with the foreign policy of the Soviet Union?

A-- I have studied carefully the foreign policy of the Soviet Union and my conclusions, by the evidence, is that their foreign policy is in the interest of maintaining peace. Take the pre-war record of the Soviet Union: In the League of Nations, the Soviet Union constantly urged the formation of a "Collective Security Pact" with the so-called democratic nations to prevent the aggressions of Hitler and Mussolini. Litvinoff again and again called for complete disarmament of all nations, but his proposals were never seriously considered or taken up.

Tenney: Then you do defend the Soviet Union?

A-- I'm not one to take a narrow nationalistic view. I don't believe in the idea of "My country, right or wrong." because history will prove that our country has been wrong in the past. I support the best interest of the American working class, as well as the best interest of the working class internationally. Communists believe that as long as there remains even one Chinese peasant who is in a condition of starvation, or for that matter starvation and poverty in any part of the world, then so long as such a condition exists the threat of insecurity hangs over the heads of all of us.

Combs: Do you agree with Molotov, when he said "Fascism is just a matter of taste"?

A-- I doubt that there is any validity to that quotation. I have never seen such a quotation by Molotov.

Q-- Did you ever hear of the Lenin school in Moscow?

A-- They must have a great many schools in the Soviet Union, since the overthrow of the Czarist regime it is a pretty well known fact that illiteracy has been reduced by 90 per cent.

Q-- I'm speaking of the Lenin school?

A-- I don't recall it.

Combs: Well, they teach agents about espionage and sabotage of other countries.

Pope: Well, Mr. Combs, your version of sabotage would be anyone who fights for peace, for civil rights, against gouging inflationary prices, or anyone who advocated Socialism.

Q-- Did you ever hear of the Okrana?

A-- It seems that I have.

Combs: Well, for your information, it was the first Soviet Union police force. (Combs then proceeds to cite the names of many persons, and said that they "were shot by the Okrana and the Gaypayoo.")

Pope: They were enemies of the working class. Enemies of the Socialist state.

Combs: But many of these people had good records as Bolsheviks for the cause during the revolutionary period.

Pope: Former Ambassador Davies has written a diary concerning the trials of these traitors. As one who witnessed these trials, Davies points out that these people who were executed were conclusively proven to be on the payrolls of our most recent Fascist enemies Germany, Italy and Japan. And speaking of police forces, take a look at the record of American police. Only recently, the packing house workers went through a 64 day strike, where the police used all kinds of terror and violence, including clubs, guns, tear gas, and armored half-tracks. Finally, the packing house workers ended up with a nine cent an hour raise.

Tenney: Mr. Pope your testimony has only further proved that the Communist Party is a conspiratorial organization that uses all kinds of fronts to hide its subversive aims.

Pope: Communist are subject to economic intimidation of the worst kind, and therefore have to operate in the same way that unorganized workers would, if they were in the process of organizing their plant. It would be foolish for the workers to let the boss or his stooges know that they were organizing for more pay and better working conditions. And so such a situation also applies to some Communist—but this by no means indicates that the Communist Party is a conspiratorial organization.

Tenney: (Makes a speech about how Communist are being thrown out of one union after another. Then he cites his own so-called "good" record as President of the Musicians' Union.)

Pope: (interrupting Tenney)—Yes, but I understand the members of your local union saw fit to remove you from office.

Tenney: You may leave the stand. The Communist Party has a stranglehold on your intelligence. If you learn to think independently, there's a chance you may redeem yourself.

Now that you have read the foregoing testimony of an "expelled" Communist, and before that of one of the Party leaders who expelled him, read further from the People's World of Sept. 13, 1948, where on page 3, under the headline: "Tenney Almost Tender to Communist Renegades", the following slanders were written by Virginia Gardner and Jack Young of the Los Angeles office of the People's World:

"One of the saddest spectacles at the Tenney hearings in San Diego last week was that of former members of the Communist Party there, dismissed or expelled, who employed vague phrases about objecting to 'class collaboration'.

"Here were these super-militants now collaborating with the Tenney Committee, and even while some of them squirmed under the deferential treatment afforded them, no one could hear the proceedings and remain in doubt about their role. The local newspapers alluded to them as 'friendly witnesses.' And State Sen. Jack B. Tenney's tone as he addressed them were almost honeyed.

"William J. Pope of Poway, who said he joined the Communist Party in 1937, said, 'I was not raised to be a stool-pigeon.' Sen. Tenney smiled tenderly at him."

Observe the falsehoods and the innuendo: Neither in the criticisms made by the expelled Communist in their clubs, nor in their appeal to the membership about being expelled for making those criticisms, was the term "class collaboration" ever used—though it might well have been with justice.

Just WHO are the Real Renegades?

Virginia Gardner refers in the above to "the deferential treatment" afforded the "expelled" Communist. One of the expelled Communist though subpoenaed could not testify at the hearings because he was in the hospital awaiting an operation. Nevertheless his name was mentioned in the local San Diego papers and as a result has had charges preferred against him by the officials of Local 333 of the Painters Union. The other George Goodrow, was removed from his job by the business agent of his union and charges have also been filed against him. Jack Benet, of the carpenters union on Mon. Sept. 20 had his book torn up in his face by official action of the local union.

No right-wing trade unionist has had any action taken against them by their union. Just who has been afforded "deferential" treatment by the Tenney Committee?

the Tenney Committee was provided with the names of the eight persons expelled or suspended when the Communist Party did not make them public, was not explained," says Virginia Gardner.

We have here, a well calculated inference that the "expelled" Communist were "steel-pigeons" and that they had turned themselves into the Committee. How ridiculous -- so, the "expelled" members turned themselves into the Tenney Committee so that they in turn could be expelled from their respective trade unions thus cutting off their means of earning a livelihood for themselves and their families.

Furthermore, there were only five "expelled" Communist subpoenaed, and those five names were the only names that appeared in the San Diego papers, yet, Virginia Gardner says: "How the Tenney Committee was provided with the names of EIGHT persons expelled etc". If someone in the Communist Party did not give the names to the Tenney Committee, HOW DOES VIRGINIA GARDNER KNOW THAT TENNEY HAD THE NAMES OF EIGHT PEOPLE???? Tenney did not make public more than five names -- just what is Virginia Gardner's relationship to the Tenney Committee that she should know that Tenney had the names of eight "expelled" Communist?? This makes her the renegade.

As to "collaborating" with the Tenney Committee, "it was not the four "expelled" comrades who did this, but rather those who by their testimony indicated that they agreed with Tenney that being a Communist was something to be ashamed of. This is the real renegacy and stems from an implied renunciation of Communism, and is most certainly one of the gravest Right Opportunist positions known in Communist history. It only confirms the fact that both Right and "Left" deviations are linked together. This Right opportunist position, as revealed by the testimony was also an attempt to cover up by "Leftist" bluster and bluff, by anarchistic phrases empty of content the fact that they (the Right opportunist) do "not recognize" the capitalist state and its power as a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. It is anarchistic "latism" salted with Right Opportunist democratic illusions about the "protection" and "guarantees" of the U.S. Constitution.

If there was anything sad about the hearings, it was to see these Right and "Left" deviations from Marxism-Leninism in public proof that the CPUSA leadership (which -- rather than these misguided comrades) is at fault in spreading democratic illusions about "American" (bourgeois) democracy and failing to educate the membership in Lenin's theory of the nature of the capitalist state.

No longer ago than September 1, the Communist Information Bureau's official organ contained an article specifically referring to the United States Constitution, saying in part: "Does not everybody know that the Constitution of the United States exist, but never functions? That it has long since been reduced to the role of a mere formal pendant to the mechanism of the police state?"

What sense is there, then, in both assuming the criminality of being a Communist, and at the same time appealing to this inoperative document, the Constitution? There is no sense whatever (An exception should be made for those who, before the Thomas Committee have been accused of espionage, which is a crime, but has nothing to do with Communist Party membership).

Another falsehood: The local newspapers did not "allude to them" as "friendly witnesses." One paper alone, the San Diego Journal of Sept. 8, used the term, and what it said was: "It had been expected that Combs would treat these persons as 'friendly witnesses'." Whatever the Journal "expected," these "expelled" Communist were not treated in any "friendly" fashion. The Journal used that term in introducing its account of the testimony of George Goodrow.

Comrade Goodrow did not exhibit any "friendliness" for the Tenney Committee, when he testified: "I believe in Communism. I believe in its principles. The situation (referring to his expulsion) we are going through now is only a temporary one." Some significant testimony that neither the capitalist press or the P.W. saw fit to publish is as follows:

Combs: Do you still stand by your pledge to defend the Soviet Union in case of war?

Goodrow: I defend the interest of the working class - Nationally and Internationally.

Q-- Especially the Soviet workers?-----

A-- I defend all workers....Capitalism looks strong, this committee looks strong. Capitalism is weak, it is deteriorating and crumbling. The capitalist are digging their own grave.

More, Jack Tenney (using no "honeyed tone") dismissed Goodrow from the stand with a hostile rebuke for Goodrow having referred to Naval Intelligence men as "Fascist and representatives of the capitalist." Said the Journal's final line on Goodrow: "It was quite obvious, party member or not, young Goodrow still was an ardent advocate of Marxist theory."

Another slander: Virginia Gardner (the same who in The New Masses wrote of how "inferior" she felt in the presence of "glamorous Clare Booth Luce") and Jack Young, also wrote in the People's World that:

"When Jack Benet, a carpenter, was on the stand, Sen. Tenney said after hearing Benet's soft-voiced testimony, 'I believe there's quite a bit of hope for you.' But the Senator went on, why did he still believe in Socialism? What was wrong with this system, when he himself(Tenney) had started out at 14 dollars a week? Benet smiled and said humbly that "perhaps not all of us have your abilities and virtues, Senator Tenney."

Perhaps, in the moral code of Virginia Gardner, it is revolting that a carpenter should have a "soft voice." And even worse that he should have the unusual knack of subtle sarcasm. If she were not so gifted with a taste for slandering revolutionary workers, she would have the sense to understand that Benet's remark as to Tenney's "abilities and virtues" was a completely sarcastic reference to his "ability" to serve finance capital, and to gain from it far more than \$14 a week for such "virtues" as a red-baiter and Fascist lackey may possess.

But why did not Virginia Gardner and Jack Young report the following question and answer?

Tenney: Although an ousted red, do you still support the Soviet Union?

Benet: I will always support the working class of America and the working class internationally.

Let the readers of the People's World demand an apology for this slander, and a published repudiation of the falsehoods and innuendo written by Virginia Gardner and Jack Young against the four "expelled" Communist of San Diego.

The inference of "stool pigeon" and "informer" tossed about by both these deliberate liars and George Lohr, concerning the "expelled" comrades, not only lacks the slightest shred of proof, but falls to the ground when any analysis is made. Examine, for example, the questions of Combs and the answers of Buchanan, as to their implications.

It is plain, from the questions asked Buchanan by Combs that the Tenney Committee held possession of records showing that Buchanan had subscribed, in San Diego, to the People's World in June of 1942. Such records could only be found in the People's World office in San Diego or in the P.W. circulation department in San Francisco. Did any of the expelled comrades who testified ever have access to such records? NO, Never..

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The Tenney Committee had documentary proof that Buchanan "attended the convention of the AYD in 1944." Did he get it from the "expelled" comrades whom the People's World slanderously called stool-pigeons? The two Goodrows and Jack Benet did not join the Party until 1946! And Bill Pope was not anywhere near that AYD convention! In fact, in 1944 he was in the U.S. Army fighting the Nazis in Italy.

The same goes for the various conventions of 1945, about which Combs held documentary proof that Buchanan had attended. The story that the four "expelled" comrades had anything to do with the way information reached the Tenney Committee on all such things, is patently false. But this only proves that the real stool-pigeons are still in the Party! And, in the past, if not in the present, had access to Party files and documents ordinarily accessible only to Party officials.

Those who would expel honest Communist unjustly, those who would deliberately lie about them afterward, those who would renounce Communism and defile its principles, exhibit tendencies in so doing that are essentially of a fascist character, howsoever quarrelsome is their collaboration with the "official" fascist, such as the Tenney Committee.

This is no accusation against the Party as such, to which everyone of the four "expelled" comrades declared their adherence before the Tenney Committee. It is no accusation against the honest rank and file of the Party. It is, however, substantial proof of the validity of the warning that the rank and file of the Party should heed the criticism the "expelled" comrades made in the pre-convention discussion, that the present Party leadership is betraying and wrecking the Party and must be cleaned out—quickly and completely.

Sequel to the Tenney Committee Hearings

The story of the Tenney hearings at San Diego would be incomplete without reciting later events. It will be recalled that the Sept. 5th memorandum of IPP County Director, Lynn Akerstein, plainly said that—"The IPP State and County offices are not trying to dictate what any person who is subpoenaed shall say or do."

Nevertheless, three days after the Tenney hearings, when the County Council of the IPP convened, the faction which dominates the Communist Party brought its factional splitting into the IPP, in a resolution which had two points:

The first, praised those "IPP members" who by implication renounced membership in the Communist Party as something "incriminating and degrading" in refusing to answer on the plea that "the Fifth Amendment" of the Constitution protected them from being — in the language of that Amendment, from — "being compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself."

The second point said: "We condemn those members of the IPP that succumbed and willingly answered the questions of a Fascist committee." This was an obvious attempt to condemn, in the IPP, those "expelled" Communist who, like William Pope, defended Communism and the Communist Party in the Tenney hearings.

Since there were present not only non-Communist liberals, but also both members and "expelled" members of the Communist Party, this factional maneuver had the effect of splitting the IPP on the basis of the struggle within the Communist Party. And it precipitated sharp debate.

But this debate went heavily against the factionalist. Under Point 1, of the resolution mentioned above, the names of all those who were praised, were given. An amendment was made to strike out those names.

It carried by a vote of 9 to 7. Another amendment provided that the second point, the paragraph "condemning" those who defended Communism and the Communist Party instead of renouncing the Communist Party by implication, be struck out entirely from the resolution, was passed unanimously. Apparently the "Communist" who were ashamed of being Communist were also ashamed of their own resolution.

The non-Communist present had not a little to do with this, as enjoying a certain prestige, their hostility toward "indicting any of our own members" persuaded the factionalist that they had gone too far. Bill Pope had spoken, as a Communist, citing his right to defend himself anywhere as such; citing, also, his record of support to the IPP, for which he had gotten, personally, 1280 petition signatures out of the 23,000 total obtained in San Diego County. In short, he defended the independent role of the Communist Party within the IPP movement (an independent role that is everywhere forfeited and hidden in practice by the Liquidators who are merging and liquidating the Communist Party into the Third Party).

This smashing defeat for the faction dominating the Communist Party took place despite the support given the faction by the state IPP Director, Elinor Kahn — who chanced to be present for another nefarious purpose, that of putting over the "withdrawal", under pressure, of the IPP candidate for Congress, Harry Steinmetz, in favor of the Democratic Party candidate, McKinnon, as thorough-going a reactionary as is possible to find, though praised by Elinor Kahn as a "lesser evil than Fletcher, the Republican."

Elinor Kahn, whose infamy as an utterly putrid reformist and careerist in San Francisco, she now ambitiously hopes to make known throughout the state, injected herself into the local dispute by trying to tell the Left Wing Communist present, like Bill Pope, that they should follow the national IPP leaders, liberals, not Communist, who therefore think it all right to renounce Communism as "incriminating" and membership in the Communist Party as "degrading." They, said Elinor Kahn, have said that they, if asked about being Communist, would "stand on their constitutional rights." Her implication was that everyone else should, even Communist who are not ashamed of being Communist.

All the huffing and puffing and self-praise over "refusing to answer" whether they are Communist, was but a phony "Leftist" phrase-mongering by those who followed that line, a "Leftist" pose which could not cover up the reality of their Right Opportunist, rather their renegade renunciation of Communism.

To Elinor Kahn, this shameful, cowardly attitude come naturally. So also, the Right Opportunist embracing and teaching of democratic illusions about "the Constitution", the same thing as deceiving the workers with teachings that bourgeois democracy is real and substantial, and not a cloak to be thrown aside, at will, by the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, always the reality and substance of every bourgeois state, however "democratic".

It is one thing for a Communist before a capitalist court or tribunal, to taunt his prosecutors with their hypocrisy in chattering about "democracy" and the "Constitution", but ignoring and violating the "democratic" and "constitutional" rights of workers in practice. It is another thing, and strictly anti-Marxist-Leninist, for Communist to deceive themselves, not to speak of the masses, with false ideas and adulatory, worshipful speeches about bourgeois democracy and bourgeois constitutions.

The Tenney hearings in San Diego brought forward to plain view this anti-Marxist, anti-Leninist deviation of the present leadership of the

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Communist Party. Virginia Gardner, herself too much of a revisionist to know that she was exposing revisionism, nevertheless did just that, in reporting proudly (The People's World, Sept. 13) the following:

"At one point, Counsel Combs sneered: 'Have you finished asserting your rights?'

"I'll never finish asserting my rights so long as I'm a citizen of a free country.' she said."

So....the United States is a "free country." Small wonder, then, that the official Communist Party has given up all struggle for or advocacy of Socialism in the United States. We have a "free country" here, so how would Socialism improve it? No wonder people taught this bourgeois ideology find it unnecessary, and even shameful, to belong to a Communist Party, and small wonder that the Communist Party is, itself, being liquidated. If we have a "free country", there's no need for a Communist Party.

Other victims of this corrupting ideology are quoted by Virginia Gardner as telling the callous pro-Fascist to—"search your consciences, and in your souls you must know that your questions are not in the spirit of the Constitution," and another: "Mr. Tenney, citizenship means a great deal to me, but the Constitution means more."

Nobody ever learned such balderdash from Marx or from Lenin. Yet San Diego Communist Party leaders teach such things. Those of them who, in the IPP County Council meeting of Sept. 13, tried in vain to condemn real Communist who know how to defend Communism and the Communist Party, wrote, in that section of their resolution praising those who deserted Communism and renounced the Communist Party as something "incriminating" and "degrading" to belong to, the following sickening praise of bourgeois democracy. Of those who so acted, the resolution said that they:

"...proudly demonstrated that the United States Constitution is to them a living document designed to preserve the freedom of belief and action of all Americans."

Let us recall again that the official paper of the Communist Information Bureau of Sept. 1, 1948, page four, said: "Does not everybody know that the Constitution of the United States exist, but never functions; that it has long since been reduced to the role of a mere formal pendant to the mechanism of the police state?"

What "everybody" in the Communist Information Bureau knows, is not known at all to those who are taught by the leadership of the CPUSA. It is not known, that is certain, to the Communist Party leaders in San Diego. Hence it is possible to liquidate the Communist Party into the Third Party, without arousing instant and overwhelming revolt from below. The Left Wing, however, while defending along with bourgeois liberals and all honest progressives — what there is of value to the working class in bourgeois democracy, insists on pointing out, as the voice of an independent political party of the working class (that is temporarily strangled by a factional bureaucracy) that, only socialism can give the toiling masses really democratic rights and political freedom.

It has been highly embarrassing, no doubt, for the factional bureaucracy to have its bureaucracy exposed to the public eye for all to see, in the way it has been exposed in and around these Tenney hearings. To these self-complacent and conceited Titos, those whom they expel should go off somewhere and die, and never be heard from again. It was no doing of the Left-Wing that their expulsions were aired in public by the Tenney Committee's idiotic and mistaken notion that the Left-Wing would renounce Communism and denounce the Communist Party.

But, just as Lenin and the Bolsheviks continued to battle the Mensheviks openly and publicly in spite of the Czarist persecution of both wings of the Russian Social-Democratic Party, so, also the Left Wing cannot halt its criticism of the Mensheviks and Liquidators in the CPUSA, merely because the Tenney Committee mistakenly thought that it could make something of this. The same attempt to use the differences within the Communist movement is a standard practice of all bourgeois agencies and leaders. The capitalist press is doing its best to make use of the degeneracy of Tito to disrupt the whole world Communist movement. The Left Wing cannot alter its policy and program of restoring the CPUSA as an independent political party of the U.S. proletariat merely because the Tenney Committee wishes to stick its pro-fascist nose into the inner-party struggle. The Left Wing cannot permit that any action by the bourgeoisie should halt or alter its program to build a real CPUSA, and expel the Liquidators and renegades.

Frontier Club, (expelled)

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